

# THE SATURDAY REVIEW

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## NOTES OF THE WEEK.

The news from the Western Front in France is, on the balance, all to the good again this week. Our casualties—we know this—are much lighter than in the earlier phases of the Battle of the Somme; whilst, clearly, the enemy has lost heavily in dead and wounded, failed in his repeated counter-attacks, and been out-generalled and out-manceuvred again. In a long struggle the enemy has not the ghost of a chance of ever getting the upper hand he once had, and he has met a master adequate to crush him. But once more we must impress on readers (1) that the struggle may have to be long; (2) that the Western Front in France is the one front where it can be done. All other fronts are dreams. We reached this view last autumn. Events have come to pass within the last six weeks or so which do really place the thing beyond all reasonable doubt.

We said last week that the enemy's submarine campaign was "a much greater and a much nearer peril than the vast majority of people, informed and uninformed, choose to believe". Now the very serious losses of shipping announced last Wednesday—just double the highest total of larger ships hitherto lost in a week—are a significant and grave warning that no thoughtful person can neglect. The country has been slow in appreciating the position, and so have some leaders. We are glad to notice that the Corn Distribution Bill has passed its Second Reading, but it comes late in the day. We are now reaping the fruits of the casual and procrastinating methods of the past. Lord Devonport in the Lords on Wednesday put the whole matter clearly and candidly. The unusually bad weather and the absence of potatoes have affected the results of voluntary rationing, especially in the all-important detail of bread. Without self-denial in the consumption of bread we shall not get through to next harvest, "except with severe privation and all that it involves". That is the blunt truth. Those who can afford to vary their diet should leave bread

alone. The maximum for the average consumer should be 4 lbs. a week. Similarly, the voluntary sugar ration must be reduced from  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. a week to  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb. Lord Devonport has already decided to set up the machinery for compulsory rationing. The scheme has been undergoing revision for weeks past, and it can be put into working order at short notice. We think that it must come into force soon and that it will be well when it does. The greater part of this country is, we believe, patriotically economic, but the others—the selfish, the indifferent, the merely incurious Gallios—compulsion is needed for them.

Some uneasiness has been felt of late at the apparent immunity of the sea raiders of Germany who dash across to worry our coasts. They have generally been saved by darkness, but on the night of Friday in last week they played the game once too often. Six of their destroyers fired a number of rounds into a ploughed field near Dover, then, apparently, steered in the direction of our shipping, and were met by two destroyers of the Dover patrol, the "Swift" and the "Broke". In five minutes two of the German destroyers were sunk and others torpedoed. Our splendid fight at odds is as thrilling in the official account as the exploits of our famous Elizabethans. The "Swift" tried to ram the enemy's leading destroyer, torpedoed another boat and went in hot pursuit of her. The "Broke" hit the second boat in the line with a torpedo and fired every gun on board. Then she rammed the third, fair and square abreast, and the two, locked together, fought with rifles, revolvers, cutlasses, and every gun available. Midshipman Gyles, in charge of the fore-castle, and wounded in the eye, kept all the guns at work, and kept a rush of frenzied Germans back single-handed with a revolver. None of them remained on board except two who feigned death and became prisoners. The "Broke" wrenched herself free from her sinking adversary and went after the last destroyer left in the line. Her main engines were then disabled, but she was still equal to tackling German treachery on another destroyer which

was in flames. Meanwhile the "Swift" had pursued the leading boat until injuries delayed her speed. Truly a glorious piece of work!

That description cannot be applied to the sinking last week by torpedo without warning of the "Donegal" and the "Lanfranc" while they were conveying the wounded to British ports. Since the very devices designed to distinguish hospital ships make it easier to sink them, the Admiralty has now decided to transport the sick and wounded in ships carrying no distinctive markings. The "Lanfranc" had on board 167 wounded German prisoners. One hundred and fifty-two of these were rescued by patrol vessels, which risked the danger of being torpedoed, but the rest were drowned, largely, as an eye-witness reports, through their panic and cowardice.

Quietly and unostentatiously a small British mission has gone across to America. It is headed by Mr. Balfour, an excellent choice. Its purpose, as defined by Mr. Lansing, is not to ask for anything, but to enlighten the United States concerning the mistakes made by the Entente at the outset of the war. Mr. Balfour is to address Congress and is likely to speak jointly with M. Viviani, who, with Marshal Joffre, arrived as a representative of France on Tuesday. Meanwhile Mr. Balfour is busy at work and has had a most cordial reception. With his unconventional charm he has won golden opinions. Lord Cunliffe, the financial expert of the party, has already arranged with Mr. McAdoo the details of the first loan to the Allies, which will go to this country. America is going strong.

At the service in St. Paul's last week in honour of America the selection of the music showed a strange want of tact. The tune of "John Brown's Body" was used for the so-called "Battle Hymn" and might well have aroused unhappy memories among the American veterans present. For the song of "John Brown" is intensely partisan, and calls the Southerners traitors. If it was to be used at all it should have been coupled with "Dixie", the Southern army song. In the United States whenever a veteran of the Civil War dies a procession is formed of the "Boys in Blue" of the North and the "Boys in Grey" of the South, and they march in couples behind the coffin, to show that all enmity is long forgotten.

The Socialists in Russia and their powerful spokesman in the Government, M. Kerensky, are still emphasising their resolution to have nothing to do with either acquisitions or indemnities. They have a perfect right to their view, and it would be impertinent and indiscreet to argue with them. But Great Britain, France, Italy, and Serbia and Belgium also have a right to their opinions on acquisitions and indemnities, as we point out elsewhere in the REVIEW to-day. Great and Greater Britain have acquired German colonies in Africa, etc.; France most firmly and reasonably desires and means to have Alsace and Lorraine; Italy, too, means to have Trieste, Istria, Dalmatia, as we showed last week by the extract from the official circular to the Italian troops. Serbia will certainly desire and, we trust, obtain territory; whilst Belgium must have indemnity. Those things are well known and clear. When the United States waged war with Spain Cuba and the Philippines were acquired. Japan acquired territory when she waged war against Russia. Do let us face facts, otherwise we shall drift into a Settlement founded on illusions and traps.

One more example in this connection. In 1911 Italy went to war with Turkey. She acquired Tripoli and holds it to-day—and long may she hold it. Now, is Italy an autocracy or a democracy? If she is the latter in any sense, how came she to make this territorial acquisition? But the pretence that democracies are non-acquisitive is flimsy. It is on a par with the

dangerous trash that has been talked and written and orated about in this country lately in favour of revolution and republicanism. Some statesmen have gone much too far in this wild talk, and they know it. We, at any rate, will have nothing to do with such false and perilous stuff.

There may be most practical arguments in favour of calling up again for military service men who have been to the front, been wounded there and invalidated out of the Army; but, practical or not, one naturally shrinks from them. Some people—even many people—will say: "No, rather than that, raise the age to fifty-five". Therefore the meeting of protest in Trafalgar Square last Sunday was a natural and sincere one. The call on wounded men who have served at the front is a national humiliation. The causes of it are clear. They are:

(1) Haphazard so-called "voluntary" recruiting between September 1914 (when the true voluntary impulse died out) and the passing of the first and second Military Service measures.

(2) The spiriting away of immense numbers of men of serviceable age and physique into exempted occupations.

(3) Far too much power given to tribunals, many—we do not say all—of which have been bent on keeping down the Army and keeping up trade.

As to (2), who was responsible for spiriting away all those men at the time of the passing of the first Military Service measure? Long ago a correspondent in the "Morning Post" suggested that there ought to be an inquiry into this matter. But the question has been allowed to lapse. The number of the men spirited away was very large, there being apparently a regular conspiracy to defeat Lord Derby's and Lord Kitchener's recruiting schemes. Lord Derby's great work for the Army in those days will not be soon forgotten; but we confess we should like to see exposed and reprobated those who spirited away his men. It is wrong that they should go unscathed.

The doctors are to be mobilised for service abroad. Lord Derby in his letter to the profession states that "the number of doctors who could be spared from this country are more than are needed to supply the military requirements if adequate steps are taken by the doctors over age, or by other means, for doing the work in this country of the men who must now be taken for medical service overseas". Doctors at home have been hard worked of late in coping with the illness due to the abominable weather, which now, we hope, has disappeared for some time to come, and the scheme is bound to cause a good deal of difficulty in the dislocation of medical service.

Still, the needs of hospitals overseas must come first, and the increase of prompt treatment in France will be an advantage, though it may not seem so to the soldier who expects to get home. Doctors will have the right of appeal to the Medical War Committee if a practice at home is considered indispensable. Retired doctors will have a chance to resume work in order to free men called up for foreign service, and women doctors will be able to enlarge their sphere of experience. What "other means" worth mentioning exist to make up for the deficiency we do not know. We hope that the patent pill will not increase its already excessive circulation.

An attempt was made this week in the House of Lords to raise again the case of the "Nation". Lord Crewe suggested that diplomats at the base are more competent than soldiers at the front to judge the effect on people abroad of "a particular propaganda". We should say soldiers at the front are more competent than diplomats at the base to judge the effect of "a particular propaganda" on the French and on the



Germans—as well as on the British soldiers. As to the "Globe" newspaper, we cannot remember that Lord Crewe called for diplomatic competency as against military competency; but then another Government was in office. Lord Derby firmly supported the action of the soldiers. He was right. So was Lord Middleton, one of the not too plentiful men who fearlessly express their opinions whether these are popular or not. As regards the "Nation", those who write and edit would ordinarily have a professional sympathy with it in misfortune, for the risks to-day that wait on journalism are great. Nobody can feel sure that his turn will not come next, the Defence of the Realm being the most drastic measure brought to bear in modern times on writers and editors. The journalist is constantly haunted by the idea—which at any moment may become a fact—that when his paper is off the machine he will discover in it something to kill him. But the "Nation" really seems to us to have forfeited professional sympathy by its insistence.

If war between nations is now, as alleged, to end for ever, what of war between individuals? It really is undeniable that the struggle between individuals in the modern, highly civilised State is of the fiercest. Modern competition, modern commercialism or industrialism is about as incessant and merciless as any rivalry between human beings has ever been. We do not mean by this capitalists on one side and workers on the other. We mean the struggle for fame, position, security, wealth, irrespective of the struggle between capital and labour. The labourers struggle against each other, the capitalists struggle against each other, man against man, woman against woman, family against family—it is undeniable that this social war is fiercer in these days, or at any rate was fiercer in July 1914, just before the war, than it has ever been.

Those who want peace for ever among nations, but approve, on the other hand, of war for ever among individuals, reply to this: "Yes, but war between nations means bloodshed, shooting and killing and wounding; the peaceful, lawful war between individuals does not mean anything of that kind". True, but it does mean, if not broken heads, often broken hearts. It means soured, wrecked lives in hundreds of thousands, the bitterness of failure. It means ill-feeling, rivalry, and hate in infinite, numberless instances. It is fatuous—and it is also hypocritical—to deny that competition among individuals is very harsh and uncharitable, though it does not result in casualty lists and rolls of honour. If war between nations is indefensible in any conditions and should be—can be—abolished for ever, then it may very fairly be argued that war between individuals is indefensible and should be abolished. Our own belief is that neither can be abolished; but we think not a great deal of the consistency of those persons who are for abolishing war between nations as cruel and sinful, but favour competition among individuals as natural and necessary.

Bright and neat in its style, the speech of the President of the Board of Education last week in the House was very well received. It is long since a first class man in the world of scholarship has had charge of education, and we hope that Mr. Fisher's enthusiasm will lead to a Bill which will mean solid advance in our educational system all round. We doubt if the additional money he mentioned is sufficient, but at least it represents a step in the right direction. Many teachers have been grossly underpaid, and the profession has consequently been dwindling in numbers and suffering in quality. The supplementary grant is to be paid to the local authorities, and it will consider not only the maintenance of an adequate staff, but also the progress of older scholars and the teaching of handicraft, cookery, gardening, and other special subjects. The raising of the leaving age to fourteen and compulsory continua-

tion schools will cost a lot of money, but it will be well spent. The time, indeed, has come when sensible people may perceive that it would in the long run be very expensive not to spend it. So far, elementary education seems more liberally treated than secondary, and Mr. Fisher explained some elaborate arithmetic which puzzled the House by saying that it meant more grants to poor authorities than to rich ones, more attention to flesh and blood than to elaborate school buildings.

Regarding the Universities, we are glad to see that Mr. Fisher spoke of ample provision for free and independent post-graduate courses. Scholarship and learning are the business of the Universities as well as technology. Their main duty is not to fit young men to go into shops. And learning, be it noted, has not made the young savant "un peu cadavre". No class has come forward more readily to fight the nation's battle. Satisfactory as Mr. Fisher's proposals are, they have yet to be embodied in a Bill. We hope, with him, to see it at an early date, and to see that general co-operation between parents, teachers, and teaching authorities, local authorities and employers of labour, without which education can make no real impression on the country.

As the expression "saying knife" used in the SATURDAY REVIEW seems to have struck several readers as strange, we may recall Charles Kingsley's "Here-ward the Wake": "pulled out a saying knife". Also his stirring "New Forest Ballad": "The young man drove his saying knife".

Jane Barlow, the author of two Middle Articles quite lately in this REVIEW—24 March and 7 April—died in Ireland last week, as we have learnt through a sympathetic note in the "Daily News". That paper is quite right in what it says of her work. It was exquisite—that is exactly the word for "Bogland Idylls" and other books, and for the various short stories of hers which we have printed in the SATURDAY REVIEW with pleasure during the last three years or so. Not a sloppy or sloven phrase or thought disfigured her delicate and whimsical sketches of Irish life, which were choicely finished, bearing always the sign of a conscientious mind. Only one other woman that we know of since the time of Mrs. Gaskell has worked in literary miniature with a touch so sure and so refined as Jane Barlow—namely, Miss Hawker ("Lanoe Falconer"), the author of "Mademoiselle Ixe", though it must be added that Miss Hawker pierced deeper and rose higher.

Jane Barlow's verses, too, were choicely wrought and sometimes deep-thoughted, though the world passed them by as negligible. But it is the habit of the world often to pass by rare and beautiful things, choice things, and to be enormously impressed by things that only seem to be rare and beautiful and choice. Not long before her death she sent us a little poem, just slipped into an envelope, with no covering letter. We hope to print it ere long. Is it too much to hope that this amiable personality, so modest, quiet, and refined she might have tended "The Sensitive Plant", has "gone away into a world of light"?

Perhaps we may call attention to the account, on page 384, of a soldiers' concert which well illustrates the feeling at the Front, and the life there in rare moments of ease. One likes that "Rule Britannia", rolled out with the huge gusto with which they roll out "God Save the King"! For the King is no more an empty title to the Army in France under Sir Douglas Haig than to the people of India. They know about and they greatly value the King and the Prince of Wales in those parts of the world. It is good to be sure of that.

## LEADING ARTICLES.

## THE ONE DECISION WORTH REACHING.

THROUGHOUT the war, whenever a new Power has come in its allies have invariably proclaimed that the turning point of the whole struggle is reached and the beginning of the end become at length visible. The Central Powers triumphed thus when Bulgaria went in on their side—they have not a vast deal to boast of in Bulgaria to-day—and similarly when Italy joined in it was thought that, on the other hand, Germany could not struggle on for very much longer. When Roumania came in the Germans obviously were fearful, whilst the Entente Powers concluded that this must mean the end; and when the United States joined us the other day the same feeling was in the air and the same assertions were made as to the turning point of the war, the real beginning of the end, and so forth. But, after a little while for cooling down, opinion becomes more useful and considered, and we all come back again to the hard fact that the war is still with us in, one may almost say, the old habitual manner, and that the various turning points and beginnings of the end were, after all, perhaps not much more than mirages in our Sahara of strife.

The coming of the United States into the war should in the ultimate issue tell, we believe, greatly against Germany. It should fortify the Entente Powers increasingly as the war goes on, and it is conceivable that in the end it might prove actually a deciding factor by means of man power or soldiership, though that could only be a long time ahead; and though, to be frank, we should very much prefer to see the task completed militarily by the armies of Great Britain, side by side with those of France, destroying the enemy forces or driving them clean out of France and Belgium, and even across the Rhine, this is not said in any grudging spirit towards the new Ally. On the contrary, we gladly note the big, generous way in which America is raising money, and her resolution to help the Entente Powers with the necessities of life before she responds to any Neutral—a fair and wise decision. But clearly it will be far more advantageous in every way, both to the United States and the Entente in Europe, for the purely military decision to be reached by British and French arms. For one thing, if this is not done the war may go on for another two and a half or three ruinous years, for it is obvious that the United States can no more suddenly improvise and spring a great army on the scene than Great Britain was able to do two years and a half ago.

One sees then plainly enough that the natural aim and rôle of the United States should be to sustain and fortify us with ships, money, and food, in order that we may be able to live down the submarine danger—the gravest by far that has faced us in this war—the food shortage, and the financial pressure until such time as the armies of Sir Douglas Haig and General Nivelle can inflict a crushing and final defeat on the Germans. That may mean a great deal of war yet; it may easily mean a year's war still to come; but it will not mean the deferring of the end till the close of 1918, or even to some date in 1919, which will certainly be the case if the victory can only be gained through American military prowess and soldier-power. Therefore we hope and trust that Great Britain and France, increasingly fortified by the ships, food, and money with which America generously intends to supply them, will with their linked armies strike down

the immense military force of the enemy. It is a clear-cut, overwhelming military decision that is beyond everything needed. Those who are in imagination perpetually running round Europe, now feeling the Kaiser's pulse to discover whether he is not in a very bad way, now shaking hands with Turkey or fixing up a charming little arrangement with the Austrian Emperor, and now hoping to net in yet one other Neutral, however small, are on the wrong lines altogether. Likewise are they who snap up from week to week the least considered trifle about a strike in Baden or Berlin, or who live in expectation of some minority or majority German Socialist coming out openly against the war and the High Command. These events, even if they happened, would not end the war, and assuming they did somehow end it, the sure result would be another war in the not distant future, when the alliance against the Germans might not be nearly so considerable as it is to-day. If the Germans are not signally, completely defeated in the field the mischief will return. If they have to run away through some defection in Germany itself they will live to fight another day. It argues an entire misunderstanding of the German character and of human nature to suppose that Germany can be defeated once and for all, and the world hereafter lapped in universal peace, by an uprising of the Social Democrats in that country or by some imbroglio in Austria-Hungary.

The vast mass of the British and French soldiers at the front in France to-day, leaders and rank and file alike, desire, we may be quite sure, no such botched and inconclusive result as that. They want an end secured by feat of arms, an outright military decision. They recognise that this is the one decision worth reaching. That can alone repay them for the immense sacrifices and hardships which have been put upon them. They want the virile way; and they are confident that they can carry out the giant task if the people at home will wait and work with patience and the new Ally will pour in food and money. The splendid fresh thrusts of Sir Douglas Haig's armies in France this week should persuade everyone to fix his attention on what the British soldiers are doing, not on what a knot of wretched Berlin strikers are talking, or on what two or three Austrian impostors are said to be plotting. In despair over these gobe-mouches one sometimes thinks it would be good if all these stories about plots in Berlin, intrigues in Austria, and qualms in Turkey were censored away. Some are silly, others are sly, and the general tendency of them all is merely to obscure the issues and take the attention of the public in this country off the real news that supremely matters—the heroism of the British Armies in France and the tremendous task before them.

## THE FALLACY OF "NO ANNEXATIONS".

IT is remarkable how the delusive cry of "no annexations" is raised from time to time in various parts of Europe. We cannot be surprised that various Socialists have adopted it as a motto, because they are in the early stages of humanitarian enthusiasm, and they are declaring only their own policy. Nor is it wonderful that the "moderates" in Germany and Austria should believe that peace would be cheaply purchased by a return to the territorial arrangements that existed before the war. Probably the German Chancellor agrees with the "moderates", but he is not allowed to say so, and the men who hold chief power in Germany are still proclaiming that even



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this "purely defensive" war must end in an increase of German strategic outposts east and west, and even, if possible, oversea. It is when the cry of "no annexations" is raised in this country that it offends common sense, and may even create a slack-minded tolerance which would prove dangerous in the days of peace. Why should there be no annexations? How are the objects of the war to be attained if no transfer of territory takes place?

We altogether demur to the doctrine that some mysterious overriding law forbids the exaction from Germany of the full penalty for her crimes. The people here who say that Germany must not be humiliated, that the terms of peace must leave no sense of exasperation in the minds of the defeated nation, must clear their minds of cant. The greatest conflict in human history is not going to end in blissful equality between victor and conquered. If we do not win this war we are going to enter a period of national humiliation, and we shall suffer privations and losses of every kind. What is the use of saying that we are fighting for our very existence, and then deluding ourselves with the notion that the war can end in leaving the relative positions of the great States as they were when the war began? Our position resembles that of each of the chief Powers. In a struggle such as this everything is at stake, and it is idle to imagine that any single Power can emerge from the war with nothing lost and nothing gained. The judgment of battle will be followed in due course by sentence, and if the sentence is proportionate to the crime it will be a heavy one. Of all the Powers the one least likely to escape is the chief criminal. Our pacifists and democrats are extraordinarily inconsistent when they say in one breath that Hohenzollerns and autocrats must perish because they engineered the war, and in the next that the treaty of peace must not leave any sense of injury behind it. They try to escape the charge of inconsistency by distinguishing between the Kaiser and his generous-hearted people! But the distinction is roughly rejected by the German people themselves, and it is as clear as daylight that the whole German democracy set out in 1914 with joyful hearts to crush their fellow democrats of France and Belgium, and that, if there is now any little rift within the lute, it is because the great war has not prospered. We shall always protest against the weak and sentimental theory that the Germans are not guilty accessories of all the German Government's crimes. The German Army is the German people, and the idea that Germany at war can do no wrong was not the intellectual crotchet of a military coterie, but the accepted creed of a whole nation.

If there is an ideal aim of the war it is that international justice should prevail and that international law should be vindicated. We are frankly sceptical when we read eloquent descriptions of universal peace and equality and other Utopian delights, but justice and law are august conceptions of the human mind, and in so far as they can be enforced as practical realities so far the world advances towards a higher stage of civilisation. But they must be enforced, not merely preached and lauded as ideal aims. Justice and law without sanctions and penalties are visions of little worth. The launching of this terrible war was the greatest crime in the history of mankind, and that crime has to be punished. And what of the methods that the enemy States have adopted? Setting aside the familiar tale of German outrages we might put to the no-annexationists the case of the Turkish treatment of the Armenians. The Turks deliberately put to death many thousands of non-combatant subjects of their own, using every possible device of cruelty and brutality. Is the great settlement which is to inaugurate a new era to take no account of such crime as that? Are the murderers to escape with no feeling of exasperation, to be left unpunished, because the peace must leave no irritation behind it? It is argued that the responsible leaders may be indicted, but that the Turkish people, the innocent Ottoman and Kurdish democracy, must be free. They are many

and therefore they must be immune. Really one would imagine that criminal activities are a monopoly of the "upper circles" in all lands. In practice it is impossible to discriminate between individuals and nations in the conduct of war; a nation suffers for the blunders of its rulers, and it must suffer also for their crimes. Future generations of the Turks will believe in the reality of justice if they know that they lost Constantinople because of the crimes of their fathers; if all that happens is that a few Pashas are hanged or shot, the Turkish people will merely shrug their shoulders and murmur, "Kismet, it was their destiny". The Allies have solemnly declared that the Turkish government must be expelled from Europe, and it is understood that President Wilson has adopted that, with the restoration of Belgium, as the minimum war policy of the States. Even if Constantinople is neutralised or internationalised it is clear that this one item of the Allied programme rules out altogether the principle of no annexations. We trust that humanitarian Socialists will perceive that in this there is no question of greed, but only the duty of destroying a corrupt and inhuman Government, a duty which cannot be fulfilled unless a transfer of territory takes place.

But how are the other European problems to be solved without similar annexations? We all desire to see the new Europe freed from the most pressing and obvious difficulties of the past, and some at least of these can only be solved by territorial rearrangements. First and foremost is the problem of Alsace-Lorraine. Can anyone imagine a Europe freed from the menace of war so long as those provinces remain under German rule? For more than fifty years the Germans exhausted every trick of coercion and cajolery to win over the peoples whom they annexed, and they completely failed. Within the provinces and across the frontier in France the fixed determination to secure reunion could not be shaken, and now that the hope of deliverance has dawned, is it conceivable that the Allies, if they have the decision, will permit these provinces to fall back into the aggravated tyranny of German rule? To our minds, from the standpoint of increased human happiness, of "joy in evident commonality shared", there is no war aim so important as the restoration to France of her lost provinces. Let our democrats remember that this will be the desire of the vast majority of the inhabitants, and that the provinces will be given back to a Republic which for forty years kept peace in Europe. The one European argument which Bismarck could urge for his annexation was that Alsace and Lorraine opened a gate into Germany which could not be left in the keeping of aggressive France, but that argument has lost all force during the forty years' peace of the French Republic. Again, how are the various forces of *irredentism*, always one of the menaces to European peace, to be neutralised without territorial changes? Italy must acquire those districts which are largely inhabited by her own race, and the problem of the Adriatic must be settled. If these questions are left over at the peace we are only bequeathing inevitable dissensions to posterity. The intricate problems of the Austrian nationalities, the solution of which depends so largely on the policy ultimately adopted by the young Emperor, may involve considerable territorial changes, and the Polish question, on which the new Russian democracy has already announced so far-reaching and generous a policy, cannot possibly be solved if the Quixotic idea of no annexations is maintained. The Russians themselves will probably be compelled to annex the Ruthenes of Eastern Galicia to their own Ukraine, and only very strongly asserted force will induce Prussia to abandon territory and population in order to restore the Polish nation.

So far as the British Empire is concerned, we shall be directly interested in the fate of the German colonies, and it would be well if our responsible Ministers would state clearly that, while we fully recognise that the Russian Socialists, for example, and all other sections

within the Alliance, are right to lay down their own principles of policy, we must maintain our own freedom of action in colonial matters. We have given proof of our sacrifices in the common cause in Europe, but the interests of the British race can never be confined to the Continent, and are even more vitally concerned in distant regions. Germany chose to challenge our whole position as a world-power, and her challenge was promptly taken up by every one of the British Dominions. She still regards the war as primarily a contest with this country, and in order to beat us has deliberately risked war with the greatest nation of the New World. As a result, every one of her colonies, except for one small belt of territory, has been conquered, and so far as the East, and the Far East, and Africa are concerned, the only proof of her defeat that will be obvious to civilised and uncivilised alike will be the hauling down of the German flag in China, in the Pacific islands, and on the mainland of Africa. We must remember that the German colonies were not conquered by British arms alone. Tientsin was mainly a Japanese affair, and we do not think that Japan will subscribe to the no-annexation doctrine, while in Africa French and Portuguese armies rendered valuable aid, and men of Dutch race took leading parts. No one suggests that the British Empire should annex all the German African colonies, but British interests demand that our Dominions should receive the reward of the sacrifices they have made and should be convinced that the Mother Country will sacredly regard the needs and wishes of her daughter nations. Few people realise how greatly the colonial empire of France has grown under the Republic, and in West and Central Africa France and Portugal and Belgium should receive large increases of territory. There are sentimentalists in this country who preach the doctrine that we should prove our "disinterestedness" by handing back the German colonies as a *douceur* to defeated Germany. If we acted on that doctrine we should be false to the interests of our Allies and should be branded as false trustees by all the self-governing Dominions.

We have shown that annexations are inevitable if international justice is to be enforced and if Europe is to be freed from its most menacing problems. There is a further argument sometimes used that democracies are so peaceful that annexation is contrary to their nature, and that acquisitiveness is confined to oligarchies and autocrats. History gives no warrant to this amiable belief. The United States themselves were compelled to relieve Spain of Cuba and to take the Philippine Islands for themselves, and France, in the early years of her revolution, conquered and annexed more rapidly than any monarch except her own Napoleon. This war certainly did not originate in any aims of conquest on the part of any of the Allies, but it has raised every European problem in so acute a form that there can be no real settlement without many changes of sovereignty and allegiance. If we shrink from facing this fact because of any idealist delusions our men will have fought and died in vain and we shall hand down to the democracies, which we are told are to be universal, a legacy of conflict that will long weigh them down.

#### WHAT ARE WE FIGHTING FOR?

OWING to several events lately many people have grown confused as to what the war is all about, and as to why soldiers are fighting and civilians are cheering them on. Some spectators appear to regard the war in the light of an international cup tie, whilst others see in it a sort of glorified general election, not this time the "People v. the Peers" so much as the "People v. Kaiser Bill", as he is popularly called. If anyone thinks this a flippant presentation of the case, he plainly has not read or listened to a great deal of the writing and speechifying about the democracies and autocracies and, incidentally, the theocracies of the day. As we have admitted, there is bound, of course, just now to be a good deal of conversation on these

lines, but it is to be hoped that it will not indefinitely continue; for through it the issues tend to get very confused, which is the way to help Germany.

It is necessary to turn back to the start of the war and re-discover and re-state why this country went into the war, and why she must stay in the war and make gigantic efforts to bring it to a close. Great Britain went to war for four perfectly clear reasons. She went to war in August 1914 in order: (1) To prevent Germany overrunning and dominating Europe, crushing France, and squeezing the life and the liberty out of small nations (e.g., Serbia); (2) to keep her solemn treaty pledge with Belgium; (3) not to leave in the lurch our friend France, whom, up to a point at least, we were absolutely bound to assist by force of arms; (4) to save ourselves from being crushed by Germany, which, as Sir E. Grey foresaw, and as all intelligent and honest people foresaw with him, would certainly have been our fate—and our deserts—if we had played the part of an embusqué nation and stayed at home to grab the trade of the world.

Those reasons for war against Germany were good enough in August 1914 and are good enough to-day. They are founded on considerations of honour and considerations of self interest: we came to Belgium's aid through motives of honour and through motives of self interest—i.e., self preservation; and exactly the same applies to our action in coming to the aid of our glorious and virile ally France. Honour and self interest or self preservation are inextricably mingled in many affairs of life, both among individuals and nations. It is not disgraceful or low to wish to preserve oneself. On the contrary, it is contemptible and cowardly not to desire to do so. The spirit of self preservation and the spirit of honour can keep very good company. Indeed, the preservation of honour is, rightly understood, the preservation of self; and neither nations nor individuals can really preserve themselves unless they preserve their honour. They may keep their carcasses intact perhaps—for a time—without troubling about honour; but that is not real self preservation. As we went into the war on these excellent, amply sufficient grounds, we have to stay in it on precisely the same grounds. And, moreover, it is well that from time to time we should recall these reasons for war in order that we may perceive clearly why it is that the patched up peace which pacifists are aiming at would merely mean for us disgrace with disaster.

#### THE GREAT WAR.

APPRECIATION (NO. 143) BY BRIGADIER-GENERAL F. G. STONE, C.M.G.

##### THE WESTERN FRONT FROM LENS TO REIMS.

THE resumption of the offensive by Sir Douglas Haig this week on a front of 12,000 yards, from Gavrelle on the north to Fontaine-lèz-Croisilles on the south, right across the valley of the Scarpe, has all the appearance of a frontal attack on the much-talked-of Drocourt-Vitry-Quéant switch line. Immediate success attended the infantry advance at the beginning of the attack owing to the formidable artillery preparation, and Gavrelle and Guémappe were taken together with some 1,500 prisoners on Monday. Fontaine-lèz-Croisilles, which was the most southerly objective, is described in Sir Douglas Haig's despatch as "the intricate defences of Fontaine-lèz-Croisilles". No definite trench system faces our troops on the front of attack, but the rolling country is dotted everywhere with isolated posts and short trenches, and the characteristics of open warfare are more in evidence than has yet been the case.

Before discussing the possibilities of the situation which is now developing, it will help us to glance back at the situation as it was on Saturday last as the result of the offensive which opened with the battle of Arras.

At the end of last week the combined operations of



the Allies on the Arras-Reims front had brought about a situation upon which there was every reason to congratulate ourselves. We had taken 14,000 prisoners and 230 guns, while the French had to their credit no fewer than 19,000 prisoners and 100 guns. The nature of the fighting justifies us in the belief that the total casualties of the Germans amount to something like four or five times the number of prisoners, and the actual number of killed probably bears a satisfactory relation to the number of slightly wounded.

The capture of the German position at Fontaine-lèz-Croisilles would seem to render an attack on the Bullecourt spur from the direction of Ecoust a logical preparation for the outflanking of the Drocourt-Quéant line from the direction of Lagnicourt, the possession of which was so desperately contested by the enemy about a fortnight ago. It seems probable that the Germans were fully alive to the menace which the occupation of this position by the Australians constituted for their switch line at Quéant, lying as it does towards the eastern extremity of the spur which overlooks that village from the south at a distance of about a mile. Everything seems to point to Quéant being the key position of this part of the enemy's line in front of Cambrai, and it will be remembered that the Prussian Guard counter-attacked at Lagnicourt in overwhelming force and with the greatest determination; but the Australians, for the moment pressed back, were not long in regaining the upper hand. The Prussians were driven back on to their own barbed wire entanglement, which absolutely precluded their escape, and 1,500 of them were left dead on the ground. Episodes such as this encourage one to believe that the proportion of killed in the German casualty list may be significant of irreparable wastage, and also not without their value in maintaining the morale of our men at the same high pitch, while exercising a correspondingly discouraging effect on the enemy.

The French had some very difficult country to fight through, and their success in establishing themselves along the edge of the Craonne Plateau could not have been effected without the most extraordinary dash and determination. The extension of the French offensive to the east of Reims naturally caused the Germans considerable anxiety, as it threatened to outflank the immensely strong group of positions to the south-west and south of Laon. Several strong counter-attacks in great force were consequently delivered, especially south of Neuville, on Hurtebise Farm, between Juvinicourt and Berry-au-Bac, and at Courcy, where the Russians were engaged in these counter-attacks. The Germans are reported to have lost heavily and in no case to have achieved their object.

The general position of the Allies at the end of the week—i.e., last Saturday—was, starting from the north: Lens was surrounded on three sides by our troops, and the preparations for perfecting the artillery arrangements were being completed. Hill 70, reminiscent of the battle of Loos, was still in the hands of the Germans, and valuable to them from the fact that it dominated one portion of the field and enabled the fire from the mass of German artillery in rear to be effectively controlled and directed. The capture of Lens will threaten the line between La Bassée and Drocourt, which latter place is the commencement of the switch line to Quéant, over which so much energy has been expended, but which even now is believed to be incompletely prepared for a prolonged defence. From Vimy to Lagnicourt (three miles south-west of Quéant) we had everywhere seized the crests of the forward slopes, and in some cases pushed on farther where it was advantageous to do so. At Quéant we threaten to turn the great German switch line upon which our enemy depends for the protection of the important rail and road centres of Douai and Cambrai, upon the possession of which, undisturbed by the fire of our heavy guns, depends the whole elaborate system of communications which supply munitions and food to the Drocourt-Quéant line, and enable reinforcements to be concentrated on the threatened points, as well

as providing the necessary means of retirement of the vast matériel and personnel engaged when our pressure compels withdrawal to the line of the Meuse. Cambrai is also threatened by our advance east of Gouzeaucourt, where we had already on Sunday last captured the village of Gonnellieu, ten miles south by west of Cambrai, on the plateau which is divided from the spur to the north on which are situated the villages of Havrincourt, Flesquières, and Marcoing (from left to right) by a narrow depression which widens out towards the St. Quentin Canal, where the railway crosses it about the junction near Marcoing, which lies just below the end of the spur. Without attempting to make any forecast of the manner in which this offensive may develop, it is permissible to point out that a successful advance from Lens in an easterly direction to the Canal de la Deule will have a twofold effect: it will leave the German positions about La Bassée in an awkward salient and at the same time pass round the northern end of the Drocourt-Vitry-Quéant line. It will at the same time make a salient in our own line at a point which would present considerable difficulties for us if it were a case of having to maintain it for a prolonged period merely as an offensive pivot, without being able to continue our advance from it simultaneously with the turning of the south end of the Drocourt-Vitry-Quéant line by the capture of Cambrai. From Cambrai to St. Quentin is about twenty-five miles. Our troops at Epehy already threaten the centre of this line opposite Le Catelet, which is on the east side of the St. Quentin Canal. This canal lies in the depression which runs in a northerly direction towards Cambrai, and the ground on either side is fairly open and suitable for the movement of all arms on a grand scale. About five miles north of St. Quentin the country changes its character and becomes more markedly undulating, and the canal bends to the south-east, ultimately coming round in the form of a rough semicircle to the south-east corner of St. Quentin.

At St. Quentin we join hands with our French Allies in threatening it from three sides, and the progress which they have made on a front of over thirty miles from St. Quentin to Soissons has carried them in an easterly direction to Condé-sur-Aisne, six and a half miles east of Soissons; at Condé the French line took a right-angled turn to the east in the direction of Craonne, but they have already made good their advance in a northerly direction over a considerable front towards the Chemin des Dames. It is impossible to say whether they will continue to make a direct attack from the west and south against the formidable defences which stand between them and Laon, or whether they will merely continue to keep up the pressure in this part of the field, while they develop a powerful outflanking attack to east of Reims, thus threatening to turn the German line where it rests on the Craonne plateau, and if successful securing the interruption of the withdrawal of troops and material from Laon. This would be a big operation demanding a great concentration of force over a considerable area; the Germans are fully alive to the danger to them of such a course on the part of the French, and have already given conclusive proof that they have recognised it by the violent counter-attacks which they have delivered in this sector.

One thing becomes increasingly clear, and that is, that the so-called Hindenburg line will ultimately be found to be the line on which we compel him to fight for his existence on French soil, and not an offensive line (as some critics have suggested) from which he will be in a position to exercise the strategic initiative which he claimed to have established by his retreat from the Ancre!

Hindenburg has indeed only two courses open to him; one is to use up his strategic reserve by hurrying it to the threatened points on the long line from Lens to Reims wherever and whenever we or our Allies render his positions untenable, thus dissipating his strength in a succession of defensive actions which can

only have one result—viz., to find him ultimately with his back to the frontier and no reserves left; the other is deliberately to withdraw to the Meuse with as little loss and as great speed as possible, organise his line from Lille to Verdun as strongly as possible, and attempt an offensive while the movement of our armies is in progress—an alternative, however, which, judging from the experience already gained, offers no greater chance of success, and has the obvious drawback of being difficult to make palatable to the German nation, which has been led to expect something quite different.

## MIDDLE ARTICLES.

### A CONCERT AT THE FRONT.

THE Colonel had asked me to dinner in his hut. "Come at 6 o'clock", he said, "and I may be able to give you a little amusement before dinner". He did. He and his men were to go up to the dine on the morrow; so the officers had arranged a smoking concert, and had borrowed for the occasion a large hut belonging to the company who had charge of a German Prisoners' Camp. The hut was lighted with hanging lamps, and filled with men and tobacco smoke (mainly of the Woodbine breed, which Tommy loves more than the best Havana).

At the top table is the very smart Regimental Sergeant-Major, who is in the chair. In place of the usual hammer, he keeps order by rapping on the table with a large silver cigarette case. The concert has already started when we arrive, and after waiting for the end of the ditty in progress we make our way to a table next the chairman, amidst some little applause from the men, for my host is popular.

To my surprise I see seated on one side of the hut at the far end of the room eight German non-commissioned officers, all smoking (again mostly Woodbines), and all evidently enjoying the musical efforts of our gallant Tommies. These Germans were very fine men. Two were sergeant-majors, and had most intelligent and interesting faces. Another, a studious-looking, rather delicate fellow, was, I found, a science master at some German school. He had a guitar, which he played later with great effect.

The concert went on: lugubrious songs, all without accompaniment, with verses that ran into double figures. "Don't go down the mine, daddy", and songs of the "Little Irish Rose" and "Shamrock" type were the most popular; several again of the "Scotch Whiskey" variety, and then the meeting is called to order by the chairman, who announces: "The enemy will oblige with a folk song and chorus—the best of order and a bit of encouragement, please". "The enemy" remove their caps, come to the front, bowing to the Colonel as they pass, and sing a part-song, conducted by one of the sergeant-majors, and accompanied by the delicate-looking man on his guitar. It is music—*real* music, the performers—all eight of them—obviously enjoying it. One or two have really good voices, and there is not a false note. Tommy looked on in amazement. He seemed surprised that these strange people could sing in such a difficult language and certainly surprised at the very high musical standard. The enemy is heartily applauded, and returns quickly to his seat and his Woodbines, again bowing to the Colonel *en route*.

Then the Adjutant tells stories, chiefly concerned with the troubles of young officers and raw recruits, which shake the audience with laughter. He is followed by the Colonel, who stands up, all six feet of

him, perfectly "turned out", and recites in most racy manner "The Gee Bung Polo Club". The applause was intense, and this although there were probably not half a dozen men in the hut who could tell you anything about the game of polo! Still, as I have said, he is a good Colonel.

And now the chairman announces the last two items on the programme. "Best of order, please, while the enemy gives 'The Watch on the Rhine'—and you can ease yourselves afterwards by singing 'Rule, Britannia'". So "Die Wacht am Rhein" is most feelingly rendered by the enemy, and the last notes have hardly died away when Thomas Atkins lifts the roof off with that psalm of liberty which (so the verse tells us) was caught from the lips of "Guardian Angels". Then "God Save the King" and the men disperse, many of them singing as they go out:

"We beat them on the Marne,  
We beat them on the Aisne;  
We gave them hell at Neuve Chapelle,  
And here we are again".

The enemy seemed quite happy, but one large Bavarian sergeant-major, who spoke perfect English, said to me: "But, sir, surely not quite like that at Neuve Chapelle". And he was right.

D.O.C.

B.E.F., 23 March 1917.

### FRANCE AND THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION.

BY ERNEST DIMNET.

FUTURE historians will be curious to know how the Russian Revolution was welcomed in the country which so far was generally regarded as the revolutionary protagonist.

The answer must be that, although surprise and delight are sometimes companions, it was not so on this occasion; astonishment was so great that it suppressed any other feeling. The English reader must be reminded that at all times French papers are inferior to the London Press in point of foreign correspondence, and since the war the timidity of the Censor—mistrustful of the public, like all French officials—made matters worse. Only such of us as read English periodicals heard of the Stockholm interview between the German banker, Worburg, and Protopopoff in the summer of 1916. On 15 March 1917 Mr. Bonar Law discussed freely before the Commons Russian news which was carefully kept from the French the next morning, and was only revealed in the afternoon when the announcement of the abdication of the Czar had already reached the Antipodes. It took the Parisian newspaper reader months to know what the names of Stürmer and Protopopoff stood for, and the murder of Rasputin remained an enigma till after the Revolution. The name of the Empress was hardly ever printed, though oral conjecture remembered that she was a German. The "obscure forces" which were occasionally hinted at as being in the way of true Russian and Allied interest were supposed to be corruption in the bureaucracy or absurd conservatism in some aristocratic circles. The only thing that seemed beyond the possibility of doubt was that the Russian people had in the one all-important question of the happy termination of the war an Ally on whom they could count in any emergency: this was the Czar.

It was on this mental background that the great scenes of the Revolution were suddenly made to appear, and we were invited to rejoice not only at the collapse of autocracy but even at the downfall of Nicholas II. Positively at a quarter of an hour's notice we had to get rid of our laborious self-delusion, during twenty years fostered and slowly transformed into a belief, that Russia, the Russia of the Czar, might be something difficult to understand at times,

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but something which made for the ideals that France is supposed to represent. The effort was too great for human powers, and nothing was ever farther from the lyrical condition of the men of 1792, when they were liberating nations from tyrants, than our people's wonderment.

When the first shock was over there were serious issues about which we had to make up our minds. Liberty at the present day means liberty from the German; did the Russian Revolution promise victory over Prussia, or did it mean the probability of a hateful peace with the same? Revolutions nowadays are made by people apt to harbour ideas about the fraternity of men and races which are not conducive to the military termination of wars. What did the German Press mean when it bragged about making peace with Russia whenever it chose to make it? Were those journalists thinking of the "obscure influences" or of the radical nature of Russian internationalism? Even French Socialists, with the exception of the three Kienthal Deputies, felt uncertain and anxious. The days have long been past when the real conditions of Russia as a military Power were not known and only a little time was thought necessary in order to make the weight of the Eastern steam-roller felt on German soil once more. Let Russia lose another battle and the long-cherished dream of the Germans, a separate peace with somebody East or West, must become a reality.

It was then that, after three or four days' paradisiacal visions of a revolution accomplished with hardly any bloodshed by men of the stamp of Prince Lvof and M. Milioukoff, and resulting in an offer of the throne to a man noble enough to refuse it, we were told of the existence of two separate and probably antagonistic centres of authority, and realised that millions in Russia, both soldiers and workmen, must be given some weeks to recover from their excitement, to transform their delight into a sober and entirely new state of mind, at the very moment when even minutes ought not to be spared from making bread and gunpowder.

I sometimes see soldiers or workmen trying to read the Russian news in the Metro; occasionally I have heard their honest question: "C'est-y bon, ça?" and have done my best to prove that *that* could only be excellent. I have never once seen any enthusiasm over the military meetings at the conclusion of which a general in the audience hugs the private in the chair, while the maintenance of discipline is voted by acclamation. Not that these honest fellows doubt any more than we do the capacity of the Russian of any class to be a patriot—as a lady is a lady, drunk or sober; this goes without saying, but how tired the descendants of the men of 1792 and the soldiers of the Third Republic are of mere political enthusiasm and even of its least adulterated expression! The French look upon the Russian excitement as men in the prime of life who are not too satisfied with the state of their fortunes listen to boys enraptured by the notion of living their lives. The only exceptions I have noticed were the Socialists of the violent species, who cannot hear of a riot without wishing to be in it, and in default of a tyrant turn a Cabinet out in much the same style in which a *parvenu* vociferously gets rid of a trembling servant. There was M. Paul Souday, too, the scholarly but radical critic on the "Temps". This gentleman loved the idea that Gorki was to enter the new Russian Cabinet; he did not ask himself for what department of war activity a novelist of genius is qualified, and he must have been somewhat damped on hearing the next morning that his statesman meant to join at Stockholm a conference of German pacifists. But how few are belated democrats of this kind!

Ought we to conclude that the bulk of the French nation resembles the Germans in their craving for realities, and that we have replicas of a Scheidemann satisfied with a monarchy so long as that monarchy passes the democratic laws which the French Republic has not been able yet to frame? No indeed. The present writer long before the war stated his

belief that the Royalist Press was mistaken in its certitude that a war must bring about a Restoration. The monarchist idea, strong as are its arguments, has not gained an inch in the past three years. Public opinion is even silent about the working value of the mixed American system—democracy represented by personal government—which, however, is forced on its attention at every turn; for public opinion is poorly provided with doctrines and it lends a dull ear to theories. But of one thing it is certain—that is, the vanity of words, no matter how fervently repeated. The French want men capable of making the most of their country's resources in order to finish the war victoriously and to undertake its formidable liquidation wisely the day after peace is signed. They are dying to see a solid foundation of sensible politics on which they can rebuild their home life when the world's atmosphere becomes still once more—as strangely it will—but it is that they may forget there ever existed politicians and such a thing as political fever. Modest industrious commissions instead of noisy assemblies, sober decrees instead of brilliant speeches, an immense relief from words, is what France craves.

### THE TRIUMPH OF REVUE.

By JOHN PALMER.

THERE is a rather wonderful scene in Kingsley's "Hypatia", where the beautiful dancer of the story stains her feet with the blood of men recently butchered in the arena. The sentiments inspired in some of the beholders of that spectacle were sufficiently poignant; but one is tempted to wonder whether, after all, it was morally so shocking as some of the things we are witnessing to-day in modern places of amusement. The picture in "Hypatia" at least presents a contrast between two moral ideas, whereas the triumph of revue presents a contrast far more terrible—the contrast between reality and its negation.

For several years a curiously expert section of the British theatres has been elaborating a species of unnatural entertainment with a language, a music, a logic, and a demeanour peculiar to itself and nowhere else to be found. Some years ago the British theatre unconsciously aspired to fashion a perfect mould for vacancy in the abstract. Musical comedy was rejected as being too coherent. Viennese opera was discarded as being too musical. The ordinary variety programme of the music-hall offered too much scope for individual talent. Our theatres were feeling vaguely after some conventional form of entertainment which should enable vacuity itself to appear, as it were, in the absolute. Finally it lighted upon revue—not suddenly and perfectly, but with a gradual, tentative exploration of its potential aptitudes. The first revues were troubled with justifying gleams of sense and wit. They criticised habits of the town, tickled the public with researches into musical syncopation, or frankly offered some of our popular comedians opportunities to abound in their own nonsense. This was not yet revue for its own sake. The Greeks had a theory that institutions and ideas only appeared in their simplest, most elementary form at the close of their temporal career; that gradually they shed their accidental and irrelevant qualities, attaining an increasing purity and definition, till at last the original, underlying, primitive idea or institution was revealed. Revue during these last two years has been passing through some such career of self-discovery. Driven by an inherent logic, it has steadily divested itself of all ordinary human significance and become the thing at which its practitioners were obscurely aiming from the first—an abstract conventional vacancy without intellectual, moral, or emotional significance of any kind. The perfect revue, which will mean just nothing at all, has not yet appeared; but we begin to feel that the moment of its arrival is not far distant. Some may have noticed a legend which recently appeared upon the motor omnibus: "Have you been a C-C-Saw?" This

all but announced the accomplished fact, as late visitors to the Comedy Theatre will doubtless admit. I do not know whether the same things always happen in the same revue, but on the evening when I happened "2 C-C-Saw" invisible people in the wings threw cushions of various hues to members of the chorus on the stage, and at the conclusion of this particular number, or spasm, of the revue miniature replicas of these cushions were thrown into the auditorium. There is a theatre in the Strand the exterior of which is decorated with the effigies of several white ducks. They are there to proclaim the success and popularity of a revue whose principal song suddenly asks the irrelevant question, "Have you seen those ducks go by?" The song is sung by an American comédienne in the Somersetshire dialect, and while it is being sung a procession of ducks passes in the background and there is "quackery" in the orchestra. This, in the third year of the great European war, may fairly stand for a rough average of what the majority of our cleverest and most popular entertainers are doing for our amusement. The revue in which these ducks go by is appreciably saner than the average of its contemporaries. The lady who sings the song is talented in quite normal ways, and would in happier circumstances be thoroughly well able to amuse us rationally. But that would be against the absolute first principles of revue.

Revue is doubtless an absorbing professional enterprise, psychologically of interest to the social historian, a metaphysical adventure well worth pursuing to extremes. But we must not forget that there are quite a number of people, the intelligent playgoers of normal times, who refuse to submit to the discipline and apprenticeship necessary to the understanding of revue. These intelligent playgoers, persons who frequented the better theatres in the days before the war, have recently tended to abandon them in a pained astonishment. They are not at present making their grievances known. Other matters exercise their time and mind. But when the war is over, and there begins to be once more leisure to form and to direct opinions upon other than matters seriously and strictly national, people will suddenly want to know what has become of the drama, or at least it is to be hoped that they will. The theatre will then very probably plead that, as in war-time nobody seemed very urgently to want the drama, but everybody wanted revue instead, the drama had necessarily to retire. To which it will be answered that, under the comprehensive head of "revue", the theatre in war-time provided the public with a kind of entertainment which they would never have desired unless it had been thrust upon them. The public may be all the discreditable things which authors and managers say of it in the privacy of their self-justifying conferences; but the public would never have taken to revue unprompted. The public may be naturally silly in some theatrical directions, but revue is unnaturally silly. It could never have occurred to anyone who had not spent his time in deliberately practising an absurd convention. In offering revue to the public the managers are not offering what the public wants, but what they have taught the public to expect. Here we discover the heart of the offence which the theatre has committed, and enter the vicious circle around which every discussion of the theatre's place and function inevitably revolves. Managers on the defensive invariably hide behind their public. They say it is useless trying to amuse people with entertainments which they do not want, and assume that in saying this they have explained a thing like revue. Surely if there is one entirely obvious thing about revue it is that nobody would dream of being amused by it unless they had been deliberately trained into being amused by it. A person could no more go "2 C-C-Saw" by the light of Nature than he could choose the cut of his coat or the height of his silk hat by the light of Nature. These things are not matters of free choice, but of fashion or habit, and just as the hatters and the tailors determine the shape of our hats and the cut of our coats, so Mr.

Alfred Butt and M. De Courville determine the nature of our amusements. People go to revue because the majority of our entertainers have decided to impose this particular kind of amusement upon us. If we desire to be amused we must go to the trouble of being in the fashion, just as we would do if we desired to be irreproachably hatted. Some people are willing to go to the necessary trouble and expense; others are not.

There is another point. It is clearly more difficult to cultivate a taste for a thing like revue, which would never naturally occur to anyone as being amusing or profitable, than to cultivate a taste for good plays, which have an initial appeal by reason of their wit or sense. Things like revue are harder to understand than things like Molière or Shakespeare or Sir James Barrie. It is therefore necessary, if you really wish to enjoy yourself in the fashionable way, to go to a great many revues—to take, as it were, a course of instruction. The unfashionable playgoer will hardly believe it, but there are conscientious young people who go nine or ten times to the same revue, thereby acquiring the necessary erudition.

Our managers cannot escape their responsibility in the matter. They decided to set a fashion in war-time amusement which has to a large extent substituted a difficult, unnatural, and very technical kind of entertainment for what at one time satisfied the normal, undisciplined playgoer. They have done this on so large a scale that the ordinary playgoer, who does not greatly worry about the fashions, has retired in bewilderment to his home and the circulating library. Literature may gain thereby some old adherents of the theatre; but the drama, all that will be left of it after the war, has lost them, and will find it very difficult to induce in them a renewed faith in the English theatre as a means of natural and normal, as opposed to fashionable and esoteric, amusement.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### THE NATION'S HEIRLOOMS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Lansdowne House,  
Holland Park.

SIR,—An article in your issue of 14 April calls attention to the exodus of works of art, accelerated by the war, and to the absence of any precaution by the Government to stem this national loss, since art stands for a part of the capital of a nation—it even becomes in time one of its most enduring forms of invested wealth.

I would agree with the writer of the article that the guarding of the finer things cannot be left solely to their present owners, and that no onus should be attached to a man who exchanges a Titian or a Rembrandt—shall we say?—for a very welcome fortune in ready cash. The trouble is that in time nothing will be left to sell or keep, the nation thereby becoming doubly poor.

The gravity of the situation will probably be inquired into when it is too late. Tardy legislation may follow upon the usual Commission, and possibly a Ministry of Fine Arts might be created as a last recourse when such a post should be made immediately as part of the educational and constructive reforms we have been promised.

The repeated warnings of art lovers and experts are slow to reach official ears. They have cried "Wolf! Wolf!" when he was upon us, and now he is in our midst and harries us from his smug lairs in Bond Street. I am aware that a thousand things might make of an Art Minister merely the well-intentioned official with too great an experience of Governmental procedure and delay to be of use, yet his presence would create some sort of contact between those who value art and our Parliaments. It would be his duty to make intelligible and possibly even welcome to those in power the value of enduring things and to explain



the useful suggestions which have been made from time to time to meet the dangers of the situation. He might point out the indecency of the beggarly pittances allowed (before the war) to our public museums. He might recommend a tax on sales abroad, to be paid by the purchaser on the scale of the Death Duties. This on a masterpiece would be worth having, or, for that matter, a tax on all auction sales might be recommended, such as exists in France.

The foresight and culture of past generations have created the splendid collections which have made of England an art centre, an attraction to strangers, and a place for spending money. Should this be counted a thing of the past in the light of the constructive efforts of Americans, and must we sink below the major Powers of the Continent, to whom art and its many values are "real realities"?

Yours obediently,  
CHARLES RICKETTS.

#### WORKING UP THE REVOLUTION.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—Mr. H. G. Wells in his letter to the "Times" (21 April) has brought to a head all the discursive and dangerous claptrap which got into printed circulation after the dethronement of the Tsar. The SATURDAY REVIEW alone has understood the peril of toying with catch-words and foolish phrases. The odd thing is that other papers, after failing to show discretion, are angered, if not alarmed, because Mr. H. G. Wells wants to pass from words and phrases to their logical consequences. I hope they are alarmed as well as angered, because their habit of unreason not only keeps them far off from thought and caution, it excites those fanatics who say among themselves what Mr. Wells has said in print. Besides, there is always a rough and ruthless logic in the crowd-spirit when great political emotion becomes endemic; the unrest in Russia is accompanied by unrest around the throne of Greece; a similar unrest may become active around the Kaiser and the Emperor of Austria-Hungary; and if Germany becomes Republican her people will not be false to their habits and customs of thoroughness. There will be no compromise, no half-measures; firebrands throughout the world will be set an example of devouring "equality" and "freedom".

The German character fully active in a revolution may seem a mild thing to those who never think of national character when they talk cant about complete freedom and equal opportunity for all men; but action and reaction are equal and opposite, and if the Germans lose their mystical attitude towards their Kaiser and their State, and then plunge from autocratic discipline into the fool-fury of democratic zeal in revolution, what limits can we reasonably expect them to set to their passions?

Hitherto the German Socialist has been kept apart from other Socialists by the mystical creed of his State worship and service; his politics have been only a superfetation upon his daily life, while his inbred belief in the divinity of the German State, and his acceptance of the State's enthroned head as a leader and hereditary ruler appointed by God, have been completely German. Hence the ease with which political groups and parties in Germany have been united by the Kaiser and his statesmen in a four-fold policy of war—commercial, financial, naval and military—in order to stimulate the growth and power of their State. What will happen when the German Socialists throw aside their mystical and militant attitude towards their State? They will then become like most other Socialists, guided by pacifism in foreign affairs, and fired by aggressive aims in all else. Social earthquakes at home are likely to be their ideal of progress, and they will coo as gently as any sucking dove about perpetual peace with every country except their own. Their German thoroughness, again, seems qualified to make them leaders at International Congresses of Socialists, where the

defence of compromise will have to encounter the attack of downright zealotry.

These forecasts are worth attention, partly because British statesmanship invariably starts out from its British habit of dodging into delays and concessions, and partly because the devil we know in modern Germany can be held in check by adequately defensive preparations in other countries, while a revolutionary and republican Germany would certainly find in her national character another devil, whose influence might be more difficult to manage both at home and abroad. It is not at all certain, then, that the overthrow of the Kaiser and his house should be regarded with complacent joy by the Entente Powers. A stable form of government, however militant and aggressive, is a thing which can be studied in its own history, so that its stresses and their dangers can be weighed and measured and countered. In the pre-war days these stresses and their dangers, though advertised year after year by Germany herself, were not weighed and measured by France, Russia, and the British Empire; hence they were not countered. While Germany prepared for war abroad the Triple Entente prepared for strife at home, and cooed about peace to Germany. Autocratic Russia was as foolish as republican France and the monarchical people of Britain. It was not Germany's fault that she caught them napping, for her warnings were as open as they were frequent and caddish. Nor was it her fault that her organised power was doubled by the somnolence of other countries. A German republic eager to expand and conscious of the strength she got from her industrial zeal and her increasing population would not have been other than German during the years separating 1870 from 1914; and I for one do not like to think what Germany might be if she developed her known character in vast improvisations of revolutionary fervour. Social high explosives are so perilous and so incalculable that it is an act of caution never to interfere with them in the home affairs of any nation, whether friendly or hostile to us. The Entente Powers will probably have enough to do if the Germans themselves get rid of their dynasty and explode into democratic statequakes.

Mr. Wells in his letter to the "Times" has the courage of excessive zeal; he dares to say in plain words how he has understood the wild talk which has circulated through the Press all over the country. Instead of remembering that most politicians in our country use catchwords as a diplomat uses stock words of courtesy, Mr. Wells has taken all the gush and gabble seriously, and has come to the conclusion that the people of Britain are ripe and eager for a republic. But his mistake is a very useful warning to all the cheapjacks of democratic humbug. Sooner or later logic rules the world. If freedom is to be complete, if equal opportunities are to be given to all boys and girls and women and men; if the dethronement of a Tsar is to be welcomed with joy by the British Empire; if these and other things are to be advertised in printed and spoken words, sooner or later grave mischief will come.

It is useless to tell a discontented and fevered crowd that equality of opportunity is only a phrase, an empty compliment to the poor and to the unclever; that this ideal is impossible to make real even in sports and games however carefully the handicappers may do their work. A lie that stirs into life deceptive hopes is an unpardonable crime when orators and publicists do lip-service to it as a fixed political principle. To talk about complete freedom in a world of hazardous competition is to tell a very dangerous lie to the crowd-spirit of the striking classes. Yet this talk goes on incessantly. Further, who tells the British people that their form of government is *not* a democracy? It is an original creation of their own genius for gradual compromise, an achievement not fully reasoned out in any of its parts, loosely hung together, but elastic and busy with individual life and growth. This unique creation the democratic zealots wish to unmake, and they will certainly unmake it and destroy it if the

British public loses pride in its own work of political art in wayward compromise. Free-and-easy orators should never use the word democracy if they wish the British constitution to continue its evolution in a genuinely British way. The logical chief of a democracy is a President, a chief elected by the people for a period of years and subject to all their changing passions and whims. He is a servant only, and no servant elected by the people could ever bind together the far-scattered states over which the British flag flies and the British throne presides.

To find a truthful name for the British form of government is the very first work that our statesmen should attend to in these incalculable times. As every artist must be proud of his own calling and know it by its proper name and be obedient to its own limits and materials and implements, so the British people must be proud of their royal constitution, must put a correct name on it, and must aid and protect its natural development. For if they and their orators fail to do all this, and continue to worship the word democracy before an altar of ballot-boxes decorated with catchwords and lies, the emotional logic in the zealots of republican creeds will gather converts until they win at last a complete victory over our constitution.

Side by side with this reflection is another as important, namely, that the end of the war will mark the beginning of incalculable reactions and other social crises in every one of the belligerent countries. Millions of troops will pass from hardship and danger and discipline to the temptations of civilian life and amusement; trades either nourished by war or nearly killed by war will have to be made fit for the needs of peace, and amid all the reactions and uncertainties there will be fanatics of many sorts, all of them eager to influence the returned troops, the anxious women workers, and the no less anxious trade unions.

Fluent orators do not think of these coming times when they see a new heaven and a new earth in their stale catchwords of silly rhetoric.

Yours faithfully,  
PRIDWIN.

#### THE BELLY AND THE MEMBERS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—I cannot help thinking that if some of your contributors and correspondents had studied their Shakespeare a little more carefully they might have kept silence, and at any rate would have expressed themselves differently. The fable of "The Belly and the Members" ("Coriolanus": Act I. Scene 1) is a complete answer to all who argue that to enfranchise the masses is to set on foot a campaign against the existing distribution of property. The complaint that the rich by reason of their riches are able to tyrannise over the poor is as old as humanity itself and is nowhere more bitter than in backward communities where the rich are very little richer than the poor. Nowhere is the moneyed man worse hated than in the rural village communities of India, and nowhere is the moneylender more of a necessary of life. Yet the Indian village has hardly emerged from the state of prehistoric Socialism, and the moneylender differs from the cultivating villager mainly by reason that the lender deals in coin and the cultivator deals in the products of the ground. The village tenantry may be said, broadly speaking, to have all things in common—except coin—and when coin is wanted the villager must needs go into debt because he has eaten the produce of his field or bartered it with the village artisan for clothing or tools. But the debtor becomes the slave of the creditor, and there is no harder slave-driver than the Indian *sahukar*. The tyranny of capitalist over wage-earner is microscopic in comparison, and the tyranny of landlord over tenant is infinitesimal. I need only add that the distribution of political power has very little to do with the distribution of money power. There are capitalists and wage-earners, landlords and tenants, under the most democratic as well

as under the most despotic constitutions. To quote "Onlooker", "Anacharsis Klotz" thought he had abolished inequality of wealth; but there are more millionaires in France now than there were after the Reign of Terror.

Yours, etc.,  
B.C.S. (RETIRED).

#### WHAT ARE WE FIGHTING FOR? To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Branksome Park.

SIR,—The proclamation made in the highest quarters that we are at war to establish everywhere "popular government and not liberty only", and that the Allies will henceforth recognise no other kind of government, must have been read with uneasiness by those who recall a similar proclamation made by the French revolutionists. But the following words of Napoleon regarding his projected invasion of England in 1805 may come home more to ourselves. He said (O'Meara, 1. 349. ff.) :—

"I calculated upon arriving at London in four days from the time of my landing. I would have proclaimed a Republic; the abolition of the Nobility and House of Peers; liberty, equality and the sovereignty of the people. I would have allowed the House of Commons to remain, but in a thoroughly reformed state. I would have published a proclamation, declaring that we came as friends to the English, to free the nation from a corrupt and flagitious aristocracy, and to restore a popular form of government, a democracy. I would at the same time have excited an insurrection in Ireland. . . . I would not have attempted to subject England to France, but would have separated Ireland from England. I would have abolished the Monarchy, and established a Republic instead of the governing oligarchy".

Napoleon added that "the proclamation that we came as friends to relieve the English from an obnoxious and despotic aristocracy, whose object was to keep the nation eternally at war, in order to enrich themselves and their families with the blood of the people, would have gained me the support of the *canaille*, and of all the idle, the profligate, and the disaffected in the Kingdom". This was to understate the matter. A large minority of the nation sympathised with the principles of the French Revolution, and would have welcomed the overthrow of altar and throne in England. Byron, on hearing of the victory at Waterloo, burst into curses. At an earlier date Wordsworth was even more revolutionary.

Is our present attitude—the attitude of what Mr. Wells calls a chain of free Republics across the world—to be the Jacobin one of menacing monarchical and authoritative institutions everywhere, on the plea that we shall be liberating the real "people" from the governments that oppress them and drive them into war? It is very probable that the sufferings which war has brought in its train—the rider on the black horse of famine following him on the red one of carnage—are causing dark discontent which might conceivably end in revolt. But nothing is more certain than that the German nation, but especially the trading classes, entered into the struggle with solid unitedness and ardour. The talk about "two Germanies", and about democracies being always virtuous and pacific, is worthy of the demagogue rather than the statesman. By no class have the atrocities of this war been applauded more delightedly than by the social-democrats of Germany.

Your obedient servant,  
DOUGLAS MACLEANE.

#### KAISER AND GERMAN PEOPLE. To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

94, Park Street,  
Grosvenor Square, W.1.

SIR,—The idea has been seriously put forward that the Allies should discriminate between the German



people as a whole and the Kaiser by refusing to negotiate in any way with the latter when the time arrives for the termination of hostilities. If the war has taught the world anything, it has surely rubbed in most thoroughly this lesson—that mere opinion upon this or that question, unless that opinion is well-grounded upon accurate knowledge and careful thinking, is worse than valueless; it is highly dangerous, for it may entail consequences of tremendous importance.

The idea now mooted, that we must distinguish between the Kaiser and the German people, is one of those mischievous proposals which are sprung upon a suffering public by people who mean well but who do not think things out to their logical conclusion. For good or ill, ideas rule the world. Whether the world is ruled well or ill depends upon the governing idea. The Government of this country entertained an erroneous idea of the intentions of Germany, and hence the country has to pay bitterly in blood and money. This should teach us all to work things out in thought before venturing upon action. From this standpoint, the folly of discriminating between Kaiser and people is immediately apparent. The view that the gentle German, meek and mild, was goaded on by a superhuman being in the person of the Kaiser, assisted by his Satanic military entourage, is ridiculously wide of the mark. The war was started by the will of the people of Germany as a whole, working towards a definite end—subjugation of Europe and humiliation of Britain. This idea obsessed low and high, young and old, and acquired such a strength that it found its natural outlet when the conditions for action appeared to ripen.

The carrying on of the war, again, is the manifestation of the German people as a whole. Was any protest made by the German people against the atrocities committed in Belgium, France, Poland, Serbia, Armenia? What was the action of the German people in connection with the "Lusitania" outrage, which sent a shiver of horror through all civilisation? Were there shown any qualms of bad conscience? A wave of irrepressible exultation swept over the German nation. And so on with all the horrors of this war as carried on by the Germans, who have displayed a savagery undreamt of in civilisation. Look, again, at the "Hymn of Hate". It was a naked attempt to call forth the powers of hell—in other words, to trample upon every principle which has been cherished by the human mind for thousands of years, and which alone made civilisation possible. The "Hymn of Hate" welled forth from the very core of the German heart and shows itself not only in the words of the poet but in the deeds of the soldiers.

It is stupid to ignore or forget these things. Humanity must stamp them out sternly and unrelentingly by exacting vengeance commensurate with the atrocity, and thus making the German people as a whole realise that it has been wrong in thought and wrong in action. To talk of Kaiser and people as separate entities, and to distinguish between them, shows want of perception of actual realities.

Yours, etc.,

ARTHUR LOVELL.

MESSRS. MCKENNA AND CO. v. THE ARMY.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Oxford and Cambridge Club,  
Pall Mall, S.W.,

21 April 1917.

SIR,—Many thanks for the article in the SATURDAY REVIEW on McKenna and Co. Against the Army. It ought to be reprinted and circulated. I wish that someone had reminded the House that in July 1914 the "Nation" said: "Will no one muzzle Lord Roberts?"

Yours sincerely,

OXFORD.

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## REVIEWS.

## A LUCKY FIND.

"*Reminiscences of a Literary Life.* By Charles Macfarlane, 1799-1858, author and traveller." With an Introduction by John F. Tattersall. Murray. 10s. 6d. net.

THESE reminiscences in two quarto manuscript volumes were nearly sold as waste paper and destroyed. However, an antiquarian bookseller noticed that they were interesting—they begin with a most pleasing view of Shelley—and Mr. Tattersall has arranged and corrected them for publication. The author largely employed amanuenses, as at the time of writing his hand was tremulous and his health was much broken up. He died as a Poor Brother of the Charterhouse in 1858. His numerous publications, except, perhaps, his historical novels, have faded into the limbo of forgotten things. They are much less lively than these reminiscences, which are full of engaging details of the literati and dilettanti of the first half of the nineteenth century, as well as some well-known Italians and Anglo-Indians.

Boswell had those strong personal feelings about people—we will not call them spite, but they came near it—which lend a sharp edge to style, and Macfarlane, though he disclaims Boswellising as ungentlemanly, has decided views and prejudices which sharpen his style occasionally into a stiletto. He wrote as a disappointed and ruined man, and as a strong Tory, who saw that the Whig dogs for once should get the worst of it, and, whatever may be thought of the other claims he makes for himself, he certainly had a retentive memory and a ready gift of making friends. He reveals himself as a little man, a Highlander, petulant in youth and intolerant in age of many things, including "the reckless aspersions and ignorant, blundering, inconsiderate calumnies of the Right Hon. Thomas Babington Macaulay". Macfarlane was not good at arithmetic, nor were, we gather, some of the authors and debtors he notices, especially Leigh Hunt. Writing casually, he was not always accurate. The notice of Hood and his creditors is not fair to the former. The suggestion that Shelley was in his last years becoming a normal Christian is fortified by the remark that "when his body was found in the Gulf of Spezzia a well-worn pocket Bible was found in his sea-jacket". This is not so. In one pocket of Shelley's jacket when he was found washed ashore was a Sophocles; in the other a volume of Keats's poems.

The pluck of Keats, who was ready to fight anybody for the sake of fair-play, is emphasised; Macfarlane claims him as another valiant little man, and gives two excellent examples of his detestation of humbug. Altogether Macfarlane kept capital company, though some of his swans have sunk to geese in the course of the years. It is strange to read of "T. K. H., the poet", who, by the by, should be spelt "Hervey", not "Harvey". The pleasantest of all the poets counted as friends here is undoubtedly Hartley Coleridge, of whom we are always glad to read new stories. His father and De Quincey were great men, but they brought bottles of laudanum with them to dinner, and were really impossible creatures. Wordsworth, who seems from the ordinary human point of view supernaturally solemn and always thinking about himself, was not the pet of the "statesmen" of the Lake District. Hartley was, a harmless, bibulous genius who worked only by fits and starts. In his early years Wordsworth wrote of him "exquisitely wild", and prophesied for him that child's heart which he always retained, and which he admitted in one of his sonnets. We do not think there was any anti-Cambridge spite, in view of "S. T. C.'s" career there, in the expulsion of Hartley from Oxford, as Macfarlane suggests. Bagehot in his "Literary Studies" has explained clearly enough Hartley's disabilities as a Fellow of Oriel. Doubtless he was much happier when the author met him in Grasmere. The scene at the inn with a couple of magnums of port,

and the lively little sprite of a poet put to bed at the end by kindly hands, is the best in the book. This was the Hartley, we recall, who stole a leg of mutton from Wordsworth's larder for a joke, and who was loved by all the boys he taught as an under-master, until one day he disappeared, finding the scholastic life insupportable. Macfarlane speaks of him as stopping in the road and stamping his feet to mark the point in a story. He was brought up, we think, in Southey's house, and had, says our author, a passionate and hopeless love for his cousin, Edith Southey, which led to "a strong aversion to female society". "He did not feel at home with any woman" except one or two familiar friends, though a sudden impulse, if we believe Tennyson, led him once to take liberties. Waiting for dinner with the family of a stiff Presbyterian clergyman in the Lake District, Hartley sat bored to distraction, among a party "all silent and all damned", then suddenly jumped up, kissed the clergyman's wife, and rushed out of the house. He was wonderfully eloquent by all accounts, sharing his father's gifts as well as failings. His poetry deserves more recognition than it has secured.

"Too true it is, my time of power was spent  
In idly watering weeds of casual growth",

he wrote in one of the sonnets which might have won a place in the "Golden Treasury".

Next to the account of this wayward child of genius we reckon the attractive story of the author's friendship with William Stewart Rose, who had "wit, talent, frolic beyond the bounds of sobriety, all united with an admirable heart and feelings". That was Sir Walter Scott's view; so we can well believe that Macfarlane has not over-coloured his friend's kindness and humour. And did not Rose possess David Hives, a dull boy out of the New Forest, who rose to be his valet, was treated by Scott and Coleridge as a friend, and is suspected to have supplied some hints for Davie Gellatley in "Waverley"? Never since Sancho Panza have we come across a servant of such engaging manners and wild freaks. The beginning of his autobiography is excellent, but it only lasted for four or five sentences. That at least was more than Coleridge's poem of "Gundimore", which was to have celebrated the New Forest region. But Hives got a presentation copy of "Christabel" and a promise that he would get all Coleridge's future works in a letter on the fly-leaf.

We have only dealt with a small selection of Macfarlane's reminiscences. They are full of quotable things and illustrate the sublime cheek of Beau Brummell, as well as the wickedness of Whigs and Republicans. "Habent sua fata libelli": the little Highlander wrote for a soldier son who is long since dead. After sixty years he is revived by the house of Murray, where he used to dine well with Tom Campbell and other literary lights.

## FABLES FROM THE PULPIT.

"*Shrewsbury Fables: being Addresses given in Shrewsbury School Chapel.*" By Cyril Alington. Longmans. 2s. net.

IF truth is to be "embodied in a tale", the tale must be a reasonably good one. Jotham's fable, according to Addison, is the oldest extant and as beautiful as any written since. In that apologue, it will be remembered, the speakers are living, individual trees—the olive, bramble, vine, and so on—to which personality may without too great an effort be conceded; but when, as in these Shrewsbury fables, the interlocutors are such things as the Armoury, the Darwin buildings, the Moser buildings, and the Chapel—or, again, the choir stalls, the organ, the hassocks, and the screen—the suspension of scepticism demanded is, as was the butter of which (in another fable) the Carpenter complained, "a bit too thick". The instructed imagination recoils from such wholesale, clumsy animism. One rejects it alike instinctively and





*The Maternity Hospital at Chalons-sur-Marne.*

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upon reflection. We confess to a certain degree of dismay that an eminent head master, among whose functions is, presumably, that of educating the taste of his pupils, should hold up so bizarre a style of composition for their imitation, for boys are essentially imitative.

Another vehicle chosen by Dr. Alington to convey his lessons is the dream. In private life the habit of narrating one's dreams is not gladly suffered; but the pulpit, as we know, is privileged. "In the early hours of this morning I had rather a curious dream"; "I am sometimes persecuted by mechanical dreams"; "I say this because it helps to account for a dream I had last night"—such are some of Dr. Alington's gambits. The method strikes one as being just a little puerile. We cannot hazard a guess at what the sixth form make of it; but we can imagine Jones minimus (of the Lower School) saying to Smith minor (ditto), "Did he really dream all that, or is he just kidding us?" and Smith minor probably replying, "Give it up, old son; let's go and see if the tuck-shop's open yet".

Of the moral and religious lessons which Dr. Alington desires to enforce in the garb of fable we would speak with all respect and appreciation. They are such as may be heard in most English public school chapels, where controversy is eschewed and the word in season gets a chance; where it does not occur to one to ask what exact shade of Anglicanism is represented, and "high" and "low" disappear for the time at least from one's vocabulary. They are such lessons as go to form true manliness, self-respect, self-denial, and a sense of the reality of spiritual things. With just one expression of opinion, however, in these pages, which, being printed, must be regarded as the outcome of a considered judgment, we are bound to quarrel. It occurs in "the Chapel Bazaar", where, in the semblance of a dream, we are shown the several goods, varying in value, for which men spend themselves. "And then there was poor old Milton", we read, "who only found, after he was dead, that he had got into the wrong shop through being blind, and had spent all his money on things of silver when he meant to have spent it on things of gold. That was a very sad case." Sad, indeed, if it had been true; but what is really sad, and also surprising, is to find a head master of Eton exhibiting such prejudice. Not thus should one write of Milton, England's greatest poet after Shakespeare. Let us hasten to add that, apart from this one lapse from good taste and wisdom, it is the form, and not the matter, of these discourses that we do not like.

For it is not necessary, in order to gain the attention of boys in chapel, to "romance", to send, one fancies, now and again a hardly suppressed giggle round the benches. A boyish audience is a good and searching test of a preacher's powers. If a man will speak out of his own heart and experience, boys will listen to him; if he gives them slabs of commentary and Church history they will not. But the apparatus of fable and of dream is superfluous. Boys like directness and reality; allegories puzzle and do not take them.

All sermons, speeches, and addresses lose, without doubt, in being read. Divorced from the voice, manner, and personality of him who uttered them, they are shorn of half their strength. It is probable that the "fables" before us were far more effective when delivered in Shrewsbury Chapel than as viewed in the neutral medium of print. Yet even in their present guise Salopians, at whose request they have been published, will, we may be sure, be glad to preserve them.

#### SWINBURNE'S FAMILY LETTERS.

"The Boyhood of Algernon Charles Swinburne." With Extracts from some of his Private Letters. By Mrs. Disney Leith. Chatto & Windus.

ONE may say of this book what Mrs. Disney Leith says of her personal recollections of Swinburne—that it is difficult to know where one ought to start. Her object was to give some notes of her early recol-

lections of that gifted and singular cousin of hers with whom she sat on the nursery floor playing with bricks, and with whom she remained closely intimate until the April, nine years ago, when he died. The beginning and the end—the nursery and the grave—were the natural starting and resting places for her recollections; but where may one begin or stop in the attempt to convey some idea of the contents, the interest, and the charm of so wholly delightful a book? This is no formal biography, or one could deal with it in a formal way. The letters are not literary productions, but just the letters of a man to his mother and sisters and the women relatives of his family. There are, we believe, no letters to any but women—not even to his father. Certain reticences are to be expected, and certain effusions of sentiment. Swinburne had intense love for his mother, and a great admiration of her intellect and character; but the aristocratic lady had to be coaxed about such idols of her son as Mazzini or Hugo. The son, therefore, rhapsodised with his well-known gift for panegyric. It is touching to see how the unorthodox son expands on one topic of religious belief in which he felt on safe ground with his mother—the belief in the soul, its existence after death, and the recognition of friends in a life hereafter; and how he rejoiced to explain that this was also not merely the belief, but the passion, of those great, glorious and noble, "truly Christian" heroes of his, the Republican Italian and Frenchman, to whom the young Republican English poet burned so much incense. And we learn that though the revolutionary young poet, like Shelley, shocked the Victorian public with bizarre politics and sensuous lyrics, the supposed estrangement from those he loved, on account of these exuberances, never in fact happened.

We cannot pass, in these times, the comparatively few expressions of opinion on the larger topics outside the domestic circle which occur in these letters. Swinburne was ardently French and Italian in sympathy. What he would say of the Germans if he lived now is not doubtful; we may infer it from the following passage from a letter in the "early 'seventies". It is undated, as almost all these letters are, unfortunately, and in one or two instances we find a letter to a correspondent who, from a previous letter, we know is dead—a defect in editing for which may be pleaded the difficulty of sorting letters whose dates mostly have to be fixed by style of handwriting at different periods! The letter we are speaking of is one in which Swinburne tells his mother that "Jowett is about to spend a holiday in Germany". He had been asked by a French journal for a poem. He says: "As I like being recognised as a French poet as well as an English, I am writing them one on some music of Wagner's. I hope they won't mind the musician being a German. I hate them otherwise, but I must say the one good thing the Germans can do—music—they do so much better than any other people that no one even comes second". Then he adds, apropos of Jowett: "He would not go last year, having too much good feeling to wish or to endure to be the witness of their rampant exultation over the plunder of France and robbing of her provinces, which I like in him, particularly as his tendencies and connections are the reverse of mine, being much more in the German line than the French".

These letters are a revelation of a man's nature and a poet's nature. There is no suggestion of abnormality more than what our ideas of the poetic temperament, sensitive, vibrant, and exalted, already lead us to expect. To make this manifest, we suppose, was one of the objects of this memorial of Swinburne. The admirer of a poet may well look anxiously for traces of unsoundness, mental and moral; the association has been too frequent not to be feared. It is a price to pay too great both for the poet himself and the world. To all readers of the letters we believe Swinburne's memory will henceforth be a pure pleasure, and they will reckon him for character and dignity of life with his greater, but not more exquisitely strung, contemporaries, Tennyson and Browning.



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## GRAND TRUNK RAILWAY.

The Ordinary General Meeting of the Grand Trunk Railway Company of Canada was held on Thursday, Mr. Alfred W. Smithers, the chairman of the company, presiding.

THE CHAIRMAN said:—War conditions had created a position absolutely unprecedented, both in the realms of commerce and finance. In Canada they had had to deal with the results of a very disappointing harvest, especially in the North-West Provinces. The effect of this on their traffic had been offset by the great activity of trade in the Eastern Provinces caused by the continued immense orders for munitions and supplies given out by the British Government, and in some measure by our Allies, to the manufacturers and merchants of Canada. After a review of the accounts he went on to say that as the war progressed the prices of everything required by the railway had soared higher month by month, and at an increasing ratio as the end of the year approached. Not only did prices rise, but it had been impossible to obtain delivery of supplies, even when they were prepared to pay the high prices, and, in a word, they had had to be content with a hand-to-mouth existence. To give some idea of the magnitude of the rise in prices of materials he had examined a list of articles used by the railway and he observed such rises as 50, 70, 90, and even up to 200 per cent. in prices compared with pre-war times. To partially meet this state of things the Board had put aside £400,000, and this amount had been provided for in the figures and results set out in the report. In these times, if the war continued, no one could say what troubles they might have to face in 1917 or 1918. Those years might present difficulties of their own which the directors must meet to the best of their ability, but the Board was convinced it would be wrong not to provide so that, as far as could be seen, no legacy of deficit from 1916 should be added to their difficulties in the succeeding years. The Grand Trunk Western had given a satisfactory result, partly owing to increased rates, good trading in the States, and improved workings. The result of the working of the Detroit, Grand Haven and Milwaukee was not so satisfactory owing to the increase of working expenses, and there was a net revenue deficiency of £40,238 compared with £1,879 in 1915. This was still an improvement on 1914, when the deficiency was £103,000. Grand Trunk Pacific affairs had remained stationary during the year. The Government determined to appoint a Commission of experts to report on the position of the Grand Trunk Pacific, the Canadian Northern, and the railway position in Canada generally, and they asked Parliament for powers to assist the Canadian Northern and the Grand Trunk Pacific to meet their obligations until the Commission should report. A loan was accordingly authorised to the Canadian Northern of \$15,000,000 and to the Grand Trunk Pacific of \$8,000,000. Finally, he said that he knew the difficulties of 1917 would be greater than ever, but he had every confidence that their staff would do their utmost to cope with them and to mitigate, as far as possible, the adverse conditions arising from dearth of material and scarcity of labour, conditions which must, of course, continue while this terrible and devastating war lasted. He moved the adoption of the report.

Sir Henry Mather Jackson seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

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